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CAMEO SERIES

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The Pantheist.

I SEEK the Deity : I wrestle most ;
I who sit scorned outside the temple gate—
In vigils of the night I keep my post ;
Others are sure—I only watch and wait.

I supplicate—Who answereth my prayer ?
He doth—in murmuring waves or not at all—
In clouds he is transfigured in the air ;
Through the dense forest echoes his foot fall—

The amazing stars, each is a heavenly sphere ;
The ineffable surrounds each mountain height—
In the vast Universe, or far or near,
Throbs the great heart of all, by day and night.

Instinct.

THE flame eternal of the vestal light
Which consecrates the ardour of the soul—
The rustle of the wings of swallow flight—
The turning of the needle to the pole.

Ah! do not hamper Nature's rhythmic pulse,
Which beats in cadence to the stars that glow,
By superstition which doth sense convulse
With legends handed down from long ago!

Man, who knows nothing, doth aver too much;
And thus extinguished is, by stifling creeds,
The burning flax whose tongue of fire would touch
The distant Paradise our longing needs.

Through a Glass Darkly.

"If thou believest not as he believeth, 'tis a plain proof that he believeth not as thou believest—and no earthly power can judge between ye."—COBBETT.

CAST the eye back on History's cryptic page;
Learn of a thousand temples, thousand creeds,
What boots it if by savage or by sage
The selfsame adoration kneels and pleads?

Through a glass darkly seeth all mankind;
Who can pass judgment on his human peer?
Each may devote the tribute of his mind,
If privilege must vanish—vanish Fear.

From various rays the film of light is caught;
As doth the rainbow spread her glowing arc,
By circle half is spanned the dome of thought,
And half is hidden 'neath the earth and dark.

Elijah the Tishbite.

"It is enough. Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers."

IT is enough. The cup of life I've drained
Unto its lees. 'Tis hemlock at the last.
My sandals worn, my garments travel-stained,
Stretch the grey milestones in a vista passed.

It is enough. Now take away my life.
My soul is noble by an accident.
With powers that quell me I am e'er at strife;
Like sea-weed tossed, I drift—so Nature meant.

Enough—I am not better than my sires;
Myself a mental cave-man wandering—
As I advance the Lord of Hosts retires;
Eludes the arms that would about Him cling.

Sakya-Mouni.

BEHOLD! the saint exclaimed; the Heavens fall down,
Or Earth is lift unto them; stars so bright,
So full, shine in the void—a sense, unknown
As yet, upon my spirit doth alight.

Death flies the world on yonder fleecy cloud;
Banished are sin and suffering henceforth;
The unusual sky so luminously bowed
Some revolution augurs on this earth.

Said I (he needed not), to-morrow morn
Unruffled still will break, O Anchorite!
His hair was matted and his face was worn;
I left him to his thoughts and fields of light.

The Creeper.

A SPORE, transparent, green, which in the sun
The bark embraces of a peepul-tree.
Ah! have a care! Thy lowest branch is won!
Canst thou not shake this parasite from thee?

It drops its gauzy tendrils on the Earth:
It leaps, it laughs, it gains the topmost bough—
The tree is troubled round about its girth,
But all unconscious—Wherefore should it know?

The sapless trunk hath slowly crumbled down;
The withered weed lies tangled in a heap;
Its own dependence hath it overthrown—
It lies at rest. It cannot even creep.

Æternum Salve!

LIMITLESS space, infinity of time—
Æternum salve! take me to thy heart,
Consigned to silence 'mid the stars sublime;
Absorbed, immutable, how strange thou art!

Something, yet nothing; everything art thou—
In thy long arms is Deity concealed—
To the unutterable the head must bow—
Man stands appalled before the unrevealed.

Caught in the rapids, can I stem their thrall?
Helpless I'm hurried to their vortex brink—
I lift my hands above the waters' fall,
And cry "Æternum salve!" ere I sink.

Melancholia.

THE ground is ghostly with the dews that fall ;
Far in the sky there reigns unearthly light ;
Fugitive spirit-clouds the sense appal ;
Give me back youth, O melancholy Night !

Ambition climbs in life's effulgent hours,
Climbs oft to vain and visionary height ;
No more I enter fancy's fairy bowers ;
Give me back Hope, O melancholy Night !

Hers was the grace of Helen, Ninon's bloom ;
She was a saint, she was my heart's delight.
Passion eclipsed casts all the soul in gloom ;
Give me back Love, O melancholy Night !

"A winding-sheet bears no Pocket."

IN vain the sapient or the cynic saith,
"A winding-sheet not any pocket bears."
Immersed in life man disregardeth Death
And is not daunted by imagined fears.

The house you live in is a house of cards;
Nothing endures and everything must pass;
To other hands Fate all you have awards;
The gold we cannot keep, should we amass?

The sword of Damocles hangs over all,
Held by a single hair—let it dismay!
Inevitably, certainly, 'twill fall.
Lo! sleep rehearses death—the final play.

The Iron String.

"Trust thyself. Every heart vibrates to its iron string."—EMERSON.

IRRESOLUTE, most vacillating man!
A very derelict, a ship at sea!
Rudderless, aimless bark, devoid of plan,
Whose idle sails hang limp and listlessly.

Stemming the waves we must not be supine;
The perils of life's voyage threat its course.
The white squall rises—mark the warning sign!
Take in the sails—diminish the wind's force.

Quiescence, turbulence, 'tis the same thing;
To each we must due vigilance award.
"Let the heart vibrate to its iron string,"
True to itself and ever on its guard.

Sunset.

I SAW a shining figure fair and round ;
It stood upon a height with tear-girt eye.
Hushed in a dread solemnity profound,
The world was witness as it stooped to die.

The foe was near at hand ; for underneath
He strode immense and drew a shadowy train ;
Climbed he the hills charged with the chills of death ;
'Twas his to vanquish and 'twas his to reign.

O ! for the spent meridian to absorb
Each creeping mist ! but youth and strength were gone ;
Its robes of purple, so, the sinking orb
Gathered around it and no more it shone.

The Devil Speaks of his Creation by Man.

"IF man from Matter anything doth form
'Tis what like Frankenstein he cannot quell ;
As easily control the hurtling storm
Or curb the billows in their ebb and swell.

Thus was conceived a phantom of his brain
Inscribed the Evil One—I am that gnome—
A thing misshapen, wrought of sin and pain,
Born on the earth and doomed on earth to roam.

What Nature made, she made of kindly grace—
The thinking Sage, fair Woman, æther blue—
She gave to each their own adapted face,
But man made *me* both monstrous and untrue !

Insomnia.

DESCENDING dew, thou spirit of the night,
Sweet sleep, where art thou, who desertest me?
No good can reach me by the morning light.
Let the world hail the dawn, its radiance bright;
I only ask for thee.

Come on thy pinions to this withered frame
And murmur in mine ear thy lullaby—
Darkness I seek, recoiling from the flame;
Slumber, I woo thee, for I have no claim;
Petitioner am I.

Sleep, I would bribe thee—take this fervid thought.
"O thou art fairer than a thousand stars;
Thou hast the key of night and thou art fraught
With the pale moon's effulgence." Thus besought
Enchain me in thy bars.

Put me to sleep. I'll dream I'm in a wood,
Funereal trees of cypress rustling nigh,
Faint, gurgling, far, Lethean, languid flood,
While overhead a soundless peace doth brood,
Save for some night-bird's cry.

The Ancient Greek's Prayer to his Divinity.

CLOUD-RULER veiled in air,
Dost hover everywhere,
In the star-souls art there,
So breathe we thee this prayer.

To sight lost—not to heart—
We pine from thee apart—
A distant archer art,
Pointing the solar dart.

In death when we shall sink,
O, lead us o'er the brink—
That we on thee may think
Though spirit, chain and link.

The Escurial.

'NEATH the high altar of the chapel there
Repose the ashes of the Spanish kings;
And though Cimmerian darkness fills the air
Through which the guiding torch its yellow flings,
A nameless pathos lingers in this lair,
Where sunk in sleep the passions fold their wings;
An airy grace, a charm impalpable
Pervades these regal courts forlorn and chill,
Most unadorned is this most high domain,
A palace and a sepulchre as well—
Nay more, a Convent sacred unto Spain,
Harmonious whole that weaves a triple spell—
O should a voice arouse each dormant reign
And Spain's impending ruin should foretell!
But no—let Death preserve his only boon
Nor violate his own Lethean swoon.

To a Child.

THY look goes through and through me,
Thy manner hath beguiled,
Can such a thing undo me,
Little child ?

Thy years are all before thee—
As yet thou'rt undefiled—
May angel wings be o'er thee,
Little child !

Thy prattle's filled with laughter,
O creature fair and wild ;
Thou'rt gone but I strain after,
Little child.

When I shall Die.

IN sleep I fold my limbs and languor creeps
On my spent frame. I slumber from a sigh ;
In sleep I wander unto shoreless deeps.
So would I die.

No wistful faces gathered round my bed ;
Nor friend nor bending child to bid goodbye ;
For flickering sense — unconsciousness instead.
So would I die.

As rivers run to the eternal sea,
The stream of life ebbs thither at the last ;
The booming of the ocean sounds to me
Faintly and vast.

Egypt Unvisited.

SHALL I yet see thine awe-inspiring land,
Walk 'midst thy ruin of primeval days,
Meet the hot welcome of thy glowing sand,
Muse as I wander—wonder as I gaze?

Shall I explore thy once majestic fanes,
Pass through the pyramids' Cimmerian glooms,
Trace on thy sculptured walls departed reigns,
Pause 'mid thy temples—ponder o'er thy tombs?

Methinks in contemplation lost awhile
E'en now on Thebes' regal site I tread,
And near the banks of Lotus-wreathéd Nile
Talk with crowned ghosts, question the priestly dead.

The Passage of the Ganges.

"ROCKS, kindred rocks, that lie around in silence,
Brooding through ages, solemn and sublime,
Let us emerge from lethargy with violence!
Let us adore the Author of all time!"

So said a rock, or sought the words to utter,
With human voice its brother rocks to reach,
But soon subsiding, it could only mutter
Sounds incoherent, rhapsodies of speech.

Responsive Heaven spake with voice of thunder,
"Thou hadst no soul, yet hast attained a soul;
My lightning falls dividing thee asunder,
And through thy rocky cleft shall Gunga roll."

A Grove of Banyan Trees.

ONCE on a time did Buddha, wrapt in thought,
Recline beneath a shady banyan-tree ;
The boughs bent downward and a grove was wrought,
And Buddha lingered there in reverie.

Its fibrous columns formed a sacred fane ;
The Hindoo made it his resort of prayer ;
The holy calm so free from earthly bane,
The lost and love-lorn sought a solace there.

Its broad green leaves conceal the crimson bird,
Still climbs the squirrel round each goodly bole ;
Shrill from the glen the peacock's note is heard,
And through the brambles sparkling waters roll.

The Fire-Worshippers.

ALLAH IL ALLAH! In your wondrous sun—
That globe of light—Thou mayest be enroll'd,
The mind disordered by a faith undone,
In its bright whiteness may its shades enfold.

Our mortal vision hath this visible sign
Of the invisible Force that's everywhere
In the vast universe—and is divine,
Holding the trembling Earth on empty air.

The dazzling object climbs the dewy East,
The breast with its own fervour doth inspire;
Of God in the blue sky 'tis the high priest
Or is the symbol; so we worship fire.

The Tomb of Hyder Ali at Seringapatam.

YON setting sun-globe's dim diminished fires
Transfuse the cloudy battlements of night;
This Indian shrine revealeth rival spires
And flusheth crimson in the waning light.

Black marble pillar-shafts support the dome
Like sentries cloak'd; on carpet squares between
The Mullahs read the Koran by the tomb—
The tomb of Hyder Ali and his queen.

By the dark cypress flank'd with lofty towers
A mosque unfoldeth in the glimmering glade;
The mighty Tippoo formed within these bowers
This mausoleum to his Father's shade.

The Nautchnee.

HE sleeps; he sees me not; how wan
that face!
What devastation hath this fever made!
The traits familiar scarcely can I trace;
My Jasmin flower is not; I do but see its
shade.

The English Hakim said he must depart;
The ship will take him to his native shore;
I am as naught—only a broken heart—
But I who loved him fondly ever shall
deplore.

My race, religion, sums up all in Fate;
I have been happy and should not
complain;
Arrows from ambush reach us soon or late—
He wakes! sip this elixir—Sahib, speak
again.

Vale.

AH ! fondest one whom I shall see no more,
Death doth not claim thee but the gaping sea ;
Go to that distant—to that Indian shore ;
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !

Ah ! child of mine, though frantic I deplore,
Fate will not turn aside his set decree,
Nor Time thy girlhood to my care restore ;
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !

Once on a time, a baby on the floor,
In thy first faltering steps I guided thee ;
A woman now I cannot close the door—
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !

Septimus to Laura.

EVERYWHERE I seek my Laura,
For estranged from her I pine,
Dream of night, the morn's Aurora,
Prythee, maiden fair, be mine.

Let us wander by the starlight
Where the honeysuckles twine,
'Neath the starry mystic far-light;
Prythee, maiden fair, be mine;

Frown thou not upon my passion,
For my life is bound in thine,
Though thy love wear other fashion
And demureth to be mine.

Laura to Septimus.

A woman's heart is tender ;
To transient love she's sold.
" Before I all surrender,
Say you'll love me when I'm old.

" Oh, take away your kisses,
My form do not enfold
Until your promise this is—
You will love me when I'm old.

" When the morn hath shed its flushes,
When the noon hath spent its gold,
When I've lost my bloom and blushes,
Will you love me when I'm old?"

The Moon.

MYSTERIOUS Moon! what dost thou
think of Earth,
If thou canst think at all? Hast thou a soul,
Or art thou nothingless, a dreary dearth?
Can a dead world the dancing tides
control?

Source of existence—the red potent orb—
Perhaps the Moon moves as its counter-
poise;
Desolate Luna, that doth life absorb,
As cold as death, whose influence destroys.

O Moon! O Sun! ye dual agents, say—
What is this world between ye that ye
share?
Adam and Eve of fearful night and day,
Ah! Why so distant in the speechless air?

The Last Words of Rabelais.

"I GO TO SEEK A GREAT PERHAPS."

I am o'erwhelmed—my soul is filled with awe.
I must advance, imperiously impelled ;
I am involved in some eternal law,
By hands invisible I am upheld.

From Something did I come upon this Earth,
From Something surely I have reason more
To ask of occult Fate a second birth,
What'er it be—upon what distant shore.

I feel I am divine and the divine
I seek with longing—though the world should lapse—
My human body thus do I resign—
I die. I go to seek a great Perhaps.

One Palm Tree to Another.

TOGETHER have we seen the early tinge
Of many a sunrise, soft, diffusing wide—
Together have we dwelt upon the fringe
Of the great sea, before its changing tide.

Our leafy voices rustled in the breeze,
Our branches swayed and touched beneath the storm,
Feuds had we none, we two familiar trees,
I loved none other than thy graceful form.

Ah! yesternight the lightning darted down;
Scathed thee—then glistened on the misty wave—
Thy limb is riven—half thy leaves are brown—
I watch thee dying, but I cannot save.

The Parsee's Farewell to the Sun.

DISSOLVE as dreams Life's disappearing scenes—
It cometh now to pass that I must die ;
Between the clouds the Sun-globe intervenes,
Sustainer of the Earth, Lord of the Sky.

Visible frame to volumes far, unseen,
Of incandescent gases, white, intense,
In thy full panoply of power and sheen
Didst thou emerge from chaos dark and dense.

Oh lead me unto light, celestial torch,
Whose sparks as rays descend through vacant air ;
Where thou dost distant set seems Heaven's porch ;
Beyond this world fain would I follow there.

The Indian Queen.

"SLEEP, lull me not; I am afraid of thee;
Enfold me not within thy poppied arms
Lest from my deep insensibility
I never wake; this thought my soul alarms."

"Vain is thy fear. How often by thy bed
I've watched thee faithfully the whole night long,
And conjured dreams about thy dusky head!
I found thee tired and I make thee strong."

The green cascade fell splashing down the rock;
From ledge to ledge the vivid waters leapt.
The Monsoon muttered. With a sudden shock
Whistled the winds—the Maharanee slept.

The Himalayas at Gangotree.

SHEER this descent how many thousand feet
From this mine eyry! It is legion lost;
The stifled passion of the torrent's beat,
A labyrinth of rocks by ravines crossed.

Source of the Jumna—here the sacred stream
Rises from melting of the snows that fall
In yonder glen—terrific! Here 'twould seem
Lies Nature's ruin—Chaos cumbers all.

Brown fern and darker pine, the silver fir
Is pale among; but whiter is the snow—
No faintest rustle doth this summit stir;
The sun shoots arrows from his dazzling bow.

The Brain.

"THE BRAIN, THAT WORLD OF ONE INHABITANT."

O BRAIN, what art thou, honeycombed with cells
Beyond the scope of philosophic ken?
The skull—a box of tricks—of secret spells;
The brain—a glowworm shrouded in a glen.

Say, shall the brain remembrance dear resign?
Memory lies dormant in a crevice dark:
The train of thought is laid—along the line
Runs the swift current from a single spark.

A world of one inhabitant, the brain!
Temple not made with hands, yet made devout—
Ashes in death—it is returned again?
"Ask of the worms!" gibbered the goblin Doubt.

The End of Life.

"At the end of life the journey is among ruins."
—SIR FRANCIS PALGRAVE.

THE hill tops are flushed with the morning;
The valley is laden with dew;
But life affordeth no warning
Nor holds in its maze any clue.

Deep pitfalls in numbers beset us;
Illusions allure to betray;
At night the whole world will forget us
When the curfew has rung on our day.

I move among ruins, am clinging;
Dejected I falter along—
"O what was the use of the singing
If such is the end of the song?"

I move among ruins, am tearful,
Myself a grey ruin forlorn;
The spectres around me are fearful—
What if I had never been born?

The Messenger Cloud.

DESERTED is the garden where she strayed ;
And faded is the rose she gave to me ;
This cell immures me from the lovely maid
I see in dreams or else may never see.

Ethereal cloudlet softly gliding on,
Stop for a moment, for the charge is thine
To bear to her, whom vainly I have won,
The burden of a passion that is mine.

Tell her that Mirza bound by bolts and bars
Is held in bondage from her fond caress ;
Say he will seek her yet beyond the stars
And press the lips that now he cannot press.

The Taj-Mahal at Agra.

RESPLENDENT twice, the dark Oriental
Queen,
Lovely in life, and exquisite in death—
The moonbeams glitter on this marble scene
That sculptured thus almost reclaims her
breath.

Here love reluctant o'er its ashes bowed,
And brooded in this phantom-haunted
place,
Casting a veil of lustre for a shroud
Over a form of once surpassing grace.

The gurgling waters of the fountains play
And charm the cypress from its native
gloom.
This is not night, this is the dawn of day,
For shafts of light arise above the tomb.

The Three Lands.

THE gates of life admit from No Man's land;
Heralds proclaim not suffering nor sin;
Numbers advance as countless as the sand
Unto this region and are bound therein.

Vistas of charm extend in This Man's land;
The syren Pleasure sitteth on a rock;
The bower of Love by summer airs is fanned;
Soon wintry winds that bower of Love will mock.

There are no memories from No Man's land—
In This Man's land all men would fain remain—
To What Man's land drifts next the faltering band
No tongue can utter—every thought is vain.

Buddha apostrophises Man.

BOAST not thyself—consider, child of Earth,
The four conditions that on mortals fall,
The throes which are attendant on his birth,
The primal tempest—harbinger of all.

Like pack of wolves pursuant on his track
Diseases harass and bring man to bay—
Twice thus already is he held in rack
And danger twice confronts him on his way.

Unlovely age now steals away his youth
And dulls the transport of his early love,
Thus even thrice he shrinks, but yet in truth
One more calamity, he waits to prove.

For, though he hath escaped such varied ills,
The King of Terrors grips him at the last—
And careless flings him on Nirvana's chills,
Distress fourfold hath been about him cast.

Night and the Moon on the Coromandel Coast.

IN pomp of clouds she walks the dark concave;
Her train is beaded by the evening star;
The tide leaps to her on the rising wave,
Responsive to her spiriting afar.

The tented camp is stretched along the plain,
Wrapt in oblivion; still'd is every sound—
The jungle near hath its own dense domain,
Trackless within and interlaced around.

Surf-laden billows, gathering all their might
On ghostly sands, hoarsely their anthem pour—
The glamour of this wond'rous Eastern night
Will never pass—will haunt me evermore.

The Sea.

I gazed upon the illimitable sea,
And bowed myself before its sovereign face ;
For it reflects the awful deity
Endless in Time and Infinite in Space.

I told my anguish to the moaning sea ;
Bent down my fevered forehead on its breast ;
It laved my brow and whispered unto me
"Restless thyself, share with me mine unrest."

I made my cry unto the troubled sea ;
It soothed my sorrow with its answering breath—
When I am dead who will remember me ?
"I will remember thee after thy death !"

There came a tumult from the moonlit sea
A sound of many voices and they said—
"Praise thou the Lord in all His Majesty
Who moveth on the waters round thee spread."

The Devil's Dyke.

FAR from this mountain ridge behold
Where tower and turret cluster,
And all the valley is unrolled
In many-tinted lustre!

Far from this airy height perceive
The forest, field, and tower;
Where, be it morn or starry eve,
Enchanted still the hour!

Aloof from hence how seem to sleep
Yon hamlets softly gleaming!
They are so distant, vague, and deep,
In stillness they seem dreaming.

The Devil's Dyke hath gossip strange—
It is an old, old story;
It hath a dark and dubious range
A diabolic glory.

Its varied charms shall none forget—
Forget its early vision;
Memory shall muse and fond regret
Shall mingle with tradition.

Now some who come and some who go
Aver the tale a fable,
That Satan travelled to and fro
So subtle and so sable !

But, be it false or be it true,
It is a tale of wonder—
That here the Devil delved and flew
And there he vanished under.

So, be it false or be it true,
It is a tale of wonder—
That in one night before the dew
He rent this cleft asunder.

Nay, that which time hath sanctified,
Let time still hold veracious ;
And, if the Devil roameth wide,
Why is this tale mendacious ?

Go, stranger from this haunted strand,
Nor from illusion sever ;
Bear the weird legend with you and
Declare it true for ever !

In a Cemetery.

I lift the latch, I pass the wicket gate ;
A cold air meets me as from out a cave ;
Here seemeth the night-lair of death and fate ;
I shudder by each pale and soundless grave.

I read full many a text—convicted stand—
There's hope — assurance — where the willows wave !
Why, Reason, didst thou so my being brand ?
I fall a convert by my mother's grave.

Strange fascination lures us to the dead,
To whom we cling and in all ages clave—
Thus do I ponder by each narrow bed ;
Thus am I spellbound by my mother's grave.

The Source of Calamity.

SUPREME is Jupiter ; 'tis said, therefore,
Descending ills are his directed blows—
I will not creep outside the room and door
Where sits the Judgment how my pains arose.

It may be fate with retributive flail
That hath reduced me even to the close ;
Or else good fortune never did prevail,
Or else myself the thorny pathway chose.

But 'tis of *others* I would rather speak,
Whose foolish fear their reason doth oppose ;
If such are chastened, let them elsewhere seek
The cause—nor deem that Jove inflicts their woes.

Christmas, 1900.

THE gaze is lured to yonder stars of night
Trembling with pity o'er the Afric plain ;
The heart so dauntless and the form so bright
Met at life's very vestibule and slain.

Mourn for the dead—the brother and the son—
Dull alien earth on each insensate breast ;
The silken coils of being all undone—
At banquets there will sit the shadowy guest.

The crimson berries pale beside the rue ;
Ashes for evergreens bestrew the floor ;
The season comes, indeed, to me and you,
But not to those, the loved, that are no more.

"*Time is a Noiseless File.*"

(*From the Italian.*)

LOVE in the early garb of loveliness
Catches the ardour of life's morning ray,
But O ! love loses half her happiness ;
At sunset there is little left to bless ;
All things are passing, all things pass away.

Ambition doth the soul of man beguile ;
All that he clings to doth his trust betray ;
Love is a Talisman, but Time a File ;
The Holy City falls, a ruined pile ;
All things are passing, all things pass away.

In Eastern climes, in India's blazing noon,
I lapsed to breathless languors day by day,
And many times the waxing, waning Moon
Filled, in the sky, and fell into a swoon ;
Suns that have set, Moons that have passed away.

"*God buries His Workman but carries on His work.*"

MOST dire decree—resistless as the tide
That rises and is refluent—foams and fades—
The law abideth but the waves subside—
Man passes to impenetrable shades.

The links are broken but preserved the chain;
Age after age sweeps on the human race;
Kings vanish, but their dynasties remain,
Rome falls—The world is moved not from her place.

This earthly pilgrimage leads to the grave—
O thought that should dismay the stoutest mind!
His dearest nor himself man cannot save;
His web with warp and woof dark angels bind.

The Falling Leaf.

IT rustled on a bough—a gust of wind
Detached a hundred leaves. It was alarmed
And shivered to its stem; and then, resigned,
Stirred not at all—to utter stillness charmed.

The redbreast perched above the leaf and cried
Its requiem, for its moments now were brief;
The mottled owl flapp'd moth-like from its side
Hooting the dirge of that pale withered leaf.

The fitful storm came sobbing up the mead,
Then burst into a hurricane of grief,
The mist-swathed ash-tree bowed as if a reed,
In eddying circles whirled the falling leaf.

A Swamp in Florida.

DULL desolation broods upon this scene,
Yet fascination here asserts its sway,
Date palm-trees and palm myrtles intervene,
And sombre ferns gigantic choke the way ;
The air-fed Spanish moss hangs listless, green,
From out-stretched boughs of cypress looming grey,
Thick canopies of leaves spread overhead,
The stagnant pool extends its oozy bed.

The piping of some wandering water-bird
Alone disturbs the ghostly solitude,
Save where Mocassin's snake is faintly heard
Quick rustling in the spongy underwood,
The alligator, motionless and blurred,
Lies in the reeds along the slimy flood,
Where the Palmetto opes its graceful fan,
And twilight deepens from the daylight wan.

Night at Corringa, Southern India.

THE voices of the jungle faintly rise,
The hot meridian by sea-winds is fanned ;
Night, as a bird from palm-tops, downward flies,
And covers with its breast this Eastern land.

The hills and hollows soften to the skies—
A solemn stillness broods on either hand—
Night, as a ghost from grave-clothes, upward flies,
And covers with its wings this Eastern land.

The sea takes to itself a violet hue,
The moonbeams chase each other o'er the sand ;
Night, over Mosque and Temple, once anew
Shrouds with unuttered thought this Eastern land.

The Sphynx.

IF Beauty lures, Impassiveness repels—
Mute falls thy charm, thou lifeless figure there;
A power in this deserted temple dwells
And thou art hallowed in thy hushed despair.

Thy steely eyes the secret will not solve,
The riddle of the life of mortal man;
Sages may ask and ages may revolve,
Futile the Impotent himself to scan.

The shadows gather from the Pyramids,
The sunset lingers on the sandy track,
A sense of awe the vagrant pilgrim bids
To gaze—and fascinated to look back.

Myself.

WHO made me, and who will unmake me soon?
A hundred years ago I was not I—
Why do I thus possess life's fitful boon—
A jester's laugh—the burden of a sigh?

Astonished at myself I seek the cause—
The Book of Knowledge unto me is sealed—
I am fast bound in adamantine laws,
But the lawgiver's face is unrevealed.

Not to the God of Moses can I pray—
Yet to some God I'm devotee and slave—
O Thou Unknown One, shed on me one ray,
And leave me not for ever in the grave!

The Recluse in His Dreams.

"It is better to be sitting than standing, it is better to be lying down than sitting; it is better to be dead than living."—ARABIAN PROVERB.

HE escaped from the commonplace present
And built him a castle of air;
To emotions abstracted and pleasant
He emerged from the sloughs of despair,
But between lay a hill and a hollow
So wide, that the world could not follow
Him there.

His eyes had a far-away glamour;
He could not be subject to forms;
All truth did his being enamour;
He clasped her in tears to his arms;
Distraught on the hill, in the valley,
No spirit approached him to parry
Alarms.

Through terror and tempest and travail
He has passed to a passionless zone,
The life he has failed to unravel
Is gentle at last in his own—
Unwise he pursued with persistence
The problem of every existence
Unknown.

A Tomb in Westminster Abbey.

BEHOLD! These tombs with their profound appeal!
A wond'rous glamour is upon them shed;
To life, not death, let holy reverence kneel:
Love, Valour, Beauty, Pity, are not dead.

From forth this tomb, where death hath set his seal,
A maiden's spirit scatters ardent rays;
Here fond affection can for others feel;
Even in death most pleasant are her ways.

To this low vault, where darkness doth forbid
The light of day, came radiance from the spheres—
And underneath this heavy leaden lid
Are folded smiles—Why are we asked for tears?

Watchman, what of the Night?

SYSTEMS on systems in the starry maze,
Lost to conception and above our gaze,
What is this planet in the floods of light?
Watchman, what of the Night?

Systems on systems in unending space,
Amazing and confounding thought to trace,
Forming, existing, passing from their might;
Watchman, what of the Night?

Systems on systems—stars of magnitude—
Suns upon suns—avails it aught to brood,
Ephemeral man, in momentary sight?
Watchman, what of the Night?

The Weeping Ash.

THE spider of the fields his web hath spun ;
The lark springs upwards in tumultuous rush :
(Like Icarus he leaps to meet the sun) ;
This Ash-tree broods in melancholy hush.
About these solemn boughs, in pensive shade,
The world intrudes not nor its voices clash,
But I who loiter in the lonely glade
Seek the fond solace of this soothing Ash.
Thou Venus of the woods! Down at thy feet
I sink in reverence, for thy charms abash ;
And every memory passionate and sweet
Sheds its own tears beneath this weeping Ash.

To Miss Dorothy Powys.

ON HER LIKENESS TO THE POET SHELLEY.

WHAT is this Ariel face
Of pure ethereal grace ?
In Memory's cave I trace
A Poet's phantom mien ;
And Shelley is fulfilled,
Restored and re-instilled,
So occult Nature willed,
In features feminine.

She came a transient gleam,
An evanescent dream ;
Yet she to me did seem
A spirit ray'd and star'd—
As filmy as the cloud
By Shelley's spells endowed,
And so to her I bowed
As if she were the bard.

And I can not forget,
And it pursues me yet,
That in her frame are set
The opals faded long,
That somewhere 'neath the skies
On earth doth re-arise
In new and sweet disguise
Our Nightingale of song !

Enthusiasm.

SHE clasps her hands, she lifts her beaming eyes,
The lamp of life she overbrims with light,
Distilled from clouds that flit across the skies
She falls, an essence, from her airy flight.

Most pure when pleadeth she some hopelesss cause,
Most holy when she kneels to the unseen,
She is a creature born of love not laws—
Flushed is her cheek, impassioned is her mien.

In hope deceived and oft in wasted zeal
She sees the ashes of her rapt design,
Nevertheless the passionless must feel
She was devoted and she is divine.

The Mind.

WHEN one who stands upon a mountain height,
Takes all the circling landscape with his eyes,
Those eyes have drawn from Mind their rapt delight,
Those pastures wear the tinge of mental skies.

Worlds upon worlds with their majestic show
Like bubbles, from the Mind that thinks them, pour :
Passions, emotions, fancies, come and go,
Across the threshold of the mental door.

Our world without is from our world within ;
By the mind's working we have lost or won ;
Like to the spider, so our web we spin ;
As weaves the silkworm is our fabric spun.

In Memoriam. Walter Williams.

HE who was gentle, gently passed away;
He who was thoughtful, merged his musing mind
In that far spirit throng, in dim array,
Who were in life to pensiveness resigned.

Question not thou why death is here or there!
Death flits, a muffled ghost, o'er all mankind—
Enough! he lived in meditative care—
And now to Memory fond he is assigned.

With even-balanced scales he strove to stand
'Twixt the loud voice and whispering low and true—
He found in Nature the Magician's hand—
Wondered and prayed—What more could mortal do?

Exiled from Offham.

AS when we lose some fond familiar face,
Gone from our gaze—our unavailing tears
Bedew the ground and vainly we retrace
The faded lineaments that thought endears.

So do these downs and misty ridges claim,
Woods, winding ways and every coign once ours,
A deep regret beyond all words to name,
As we abandon Offham's leafy bowers.

But not alone do Offham's aspects seem
To haunt the exile in his other clime,
But all her story like a broken dream
Returns upon him from the glass of time.

First Love.

UPON the rim of the new-risen sun
I saw a shining image through the haze ;
I said, "Who art thou, O enchanting one,
Nursed in the cradle of the orient rays ?"

Then it replied to me, "I am First Love ;
With mine emotion I enkindle youth—
Invisible I fall from Heaven above—
Life lacking love would be forlorn in truth."

It disappeared ; but afterwards I knew
That First Love gone haunts recollection yet ;
The bosom unconsoled will ever rue
The first fond object on its altar set.

Last Love.

AS thus subsiding on life's fatal stream,
Its outflow to the ocean brought to view,
Love and all passion passes like a dream,
My last allegiance is to Nature due.

Her hills eternal hushed in soft repose,
Clothed in the lustre of the setting orb,
Her primal forests whence our race arose,
Claim my last longing and my sense absorb.

In the vast Whole, myself a drop of dew
Melts in the dusk, but glitters in the mist,
Stars take their stations in the darkly blue—
Somewhere in Heaven I seek a lover's tryst.

To the Reader.

FORTUNE hath smiled, who never smiled before ;
I must not taunt her—she's a woman still ;
But these my verses when I live no more,
They will.

There are some jealous of another's powers,
And some are pleased if some one else succeeds,
One such did come and took away my flowers
Or weeds.

He bound them up in leaves as here you see ;
Strewed them abroad, which I could never do ;
So if they're common, please blame him, not me—
Adieu.

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